

IN THE UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
MIDDLE DISTRICT OF NORTH CAROLINA

NORTH CAROLINA DEMOCRATIC  
PARTY; et al.,

Plaintiffs,

v.

PHILLIP E. BERGER, in his official  
capacity as PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE  
OF THE NORTH CAROLINA SENATE;  
et al.,

Defendants.

CIVIL ACTION NO. 1:17-cv-1113

**SUPPLEMENT TO SECOND DECLARATION OF CAROLINE LIM (ECF 35-1) –  
TRANSCRIPTIONS OF PORTIONS OF DEBATE IN JOINT SELECT  
COMMITTEE ON JUDICIAL REDISTRICTING ON JANUARY 11, 2018**

**Transcribed Statements of Rep. John Blust during floor debate in NC General Assembly  
on January 11, 2018.**

2:29:26 First of all I'd like to try to figure out where we are in regard to the maps, if we're back on the House because I know the Senate had a committee and they came up with different maps than was in the House bill. And I've heard, I don't know if it's accurate or not, that we're now giving that up and we're going back to the bill that passed the House. And I'm interested in that because I think that in Guilford, the House map had been worked out, not that everyone supported the bill but I think that the delegation supported what we had done for Guilford as opposed to some other plan for Guilford. So can the Chair shed some light on where we are.

2:32:10 I'm not sure how tied up a potential move to a merit selection is to the new districts, but just wanted to express a concern with merit selection, which I think, just like independent redistricting, I supported at some sort of idealistic notion somewhere off. But the hard detail is actually determining what merit is and who gets to decide what merit is because on judicial issues, on justice, I saw people yesterday carrying signs that they want justice. Some people think justice means one thing, and somebody else think justice means another. Some people think merit what makes a good judge is one thing; some people think something totally different. So the hard part is in the details of who gets to determine the merit and how do you work that out. But the practical problem I think I have with it, I think if we came up with a foolproof system, I don't think—honestly—the public is going to accept it. And people in here are probably like I am..around election time I get a lot of calls from voters asking “who should I vote for for these judges?” and I am convinced 90% don't know who the judges are. They go in and vote two names. That is one reason we made them put the partisan affiliation because that's the one thing people can understand, and it's important to a lot of people, but I am very worried that the public—although they don't know who they're voting for—if you try to take away their vote, I think that's going to be very unpopular and I'm thinking it's not going to go anywhere no matter what we do.

2:34:19 Mixed up in that is something else I'd like to do as a committee. I don't know what the timing is. But I do really think—and I think it had something to do with the districting—I really think we need to restore the primaries. Knowing the calls I get already when there's two names on a ballot for each position, I can just imagine what the public is going to do when they see 10 names—and it could happen in Guilford—or fifteen for a district court judge. I think that's going to be a mess and it's not going to reflect well on us if we don't allow the number of people who file to be pared down in a primary and I also think there will be a lot more candidates thinking “I could win with 15% of the vote. I'm going to go ahead and file and see where it goes because there's a lot of people—and I don't know as much in a rural county but in urban counties I think almost every assistant public defender and every assistant DA dreams of being a judge. And I think you'll just see a boatload of names and the November ballot is going to be very long and with a ton of names of people running for judges—not to mention appellate because we saw a few years ago didn't we have 19 names trying to fill a vacancy and the timing didn't permit a primary. Whatever we do I would like to add back the primary for judge races.

\*Transcribed by Caroline Lim on January 12, 2018

**CERTIFICATE OF SERVICE**

I hereby certify that I have this day electronically filed the foregoing with the Clerk of Court using the CM/ECF system which will send notification of such filing to all counsel and parties of record.

This the 18th day of January, 2018.

/s/ Edwin M. Speas, Jr.

Edwin M. Speas, Jr.